Dynamics of Need and Exploitation in Austen’s *Mansfield Park* and Shelley’s *Frankenstein*

Both Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* and Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* were written during a period when Britain was actively involved in colonizing different parts of the world. Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* hints at issues such as slavery and colonialism. Sir Thomas, the head of the house, leaves to attend to his property in the British colony of Antigua. Fanny, also, asks Sir Thomas about his opinion regarding slavery, but his children try to change the subject. Furthermore, Fanny is treated as a colonial subject. She is expected to act and speak in a certain way that is considered “proper”. She is also provided with an education that is designed to make her forget what she learnt in her family and previous home in order to be fit for the society of the Bertrams.

My paper will explore the theme of colonialism through the characters’ relations and attitudes towards Fanny and towards exploitation of others. Fanny is brought to family because Sir Thomas and Mrs. Norris want to feel superior by having someone in their house that they feel is inferior to themselves. Also, at the beginning of *Mansfield Park* Mrs. Norris tries persuade Sir Thomas that hosting Fanny in their house is an act of charity, but in fact, it is not. In this paper, I will provide evidence showing that the Bertrams actually need Fanny and they exploit her labor and skills, the same way the colonizer exploit the indigenous people.

On the other hand, my paper will draw a comparison between Jane Austen’s Fanny and the monster or creation in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Shelley shows that Victor created the monster to prove his intelligence and superior knowledge. He also needs this creation for company. When the creation shows that he is an independent thinker and has his own will, Victor, the creator does not like this independence because it signals his loss of control over his creation.